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The M. D. and the African Witch Doctor

Board of Foreign Missions
Methodist Episcopal Church
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The Sick World

OF THE 1,693,000,000 people in the world it is estimated that

..... more than 50% are improperly nourished

.....more than 75% are in need of some medical attention

.....more than 40% live outside the reach of competent medical aid

.....more than 50% are born and die without the ministration of doctor or nurse

.....more than 50% are subjected to the wiles and poisons of witch doctor and quack.

We Americans, with a dozen doctors and ambulances ready to rush to us at the buzz of the telephone, cannot begin to realize the physical conditions in China, India,

Africa, and the Near East. The missionary doctor may be 200 miles away, or, he may have 1,999,999 other possible patients, or he may be without adequate hospital facilities, or he has no ambulance. It is a sick and suffering world in which we live.

China has more than one million blind men and women. Much of this tragic disability could be prevented. But neither government nor private aid, other than missionary, is seriously endeavoring to cure or prevent blindness.

Modern medical methods would prevent deaths in China just as they do in America. Diseases caused by unclean methods at childbirth are responsible for more than 50% of infant deaths.

For many centuries thousands of Koreans have died yearly from cholera, typhus, smallpox and bubonic plague—all preventable where medical science is known.

The deaths of infants under one year of age in Egypt are 31% of the total native deaths. One Egyptian in every 90 is totally blind.

About one-third of the Africans who enter the mines of south and central Africa contract tuberculosis; many others succumb to venereal diseases.

A doctor's pen-photo of any one of India's 700,000 villages and towns would show: lack of sanitation, filth, hunger, ignorance, superstition, child marriage; and periodic famine and plague. Even in a progressive city like Calcutta, 50% of the people die without competent medical ministration.

Europe is today paying for the World War in the ruined, diseased and undernourished bodies of hundreds of thousands of her children now entering their teens.

Lima, Peru, has an infant mortality of 236 per 1,000 infants under one year of age. Valparaiso's figure is 333 per 1,000.

AS A cure for their ills, Asia and Africa and the aboriginal peoples of America know only the quackeries and poisons of the witch doctor and diviner, the "needles" and tortures of the soothsayer, the fears and superstitions of the native religions.

Beetle larvae, dried silkworms, scales of the anteater, elephant's skin, antelope horns, fossil bones ("grind together and shake well before using")—these "medicines" pass through Chinese ports almost daily. Here is a sample Chinese prescription, similar to others in India, or Africa, or interior Brazil:

Powdered snakes—two parts

Wasps and nests—1 part

Centipedes—6 parts

Scorpions—4 parts

Toads—20 parts

One cannot disassociate the so-called "medical" knowledge of Africa and Asia from their religious beliefs. In a religion of spiritism, all sickness is caused by evil spirits. The task of the native witch doctor, usually he is also the priest, is to drive out that spirit. It may be done by puncturing the well eye, or driving needles into an unaffected part, or poisoning the spirit, or charming the evil one away through sorcery. And if the patient is too far gone or is convicted of evil communication with the spirits, the non-Christian will promptly abandon him or her to the beasts of the wilds.

"Disease Is Moving Faster"

TIME was when a country could isolate itself and keep diseases beyond its borders. But intercommunication brings disease; the faster we move, the faster disease spreads. Every ship that comes to port, every foreign article we buy, or eat, or wear is a potential carrier of disease from Asia or Africa or the islands of the sea. Says Dr. Simon Flexner:

"In Eastern Russia and Turkestan, influenza spreads with the pace of a caravan, in Europe and America with the speed of an express train, and in the world at large with the rapidity of an ocean liner; and if one project forward the outcome of the means of intercommunication of the near future, we may predict that the next pandemic, should one arise, will extend with the swiftness of an airship."

Scientists tell us that the influenza epidemic of 1918-19, from which 30,000,000 the world over died, did not originate in Spain but in Chinese Turkestan; thence it spread via trade routes to Russia and around the world. This same desolate Himalaya region has been the source of other world-wide plagues, the "plague center of the world" it is called.

If, years ago, medical missionaries had been stationed in Central Asia and West China, much of the world's loss through influenza might have been prevented. And if they were ministering there today, the health of our children and grandchildren might be conserved tomorrow.

No Doctor, No Nurse

YET in all that vast country of Central Asia—including Tibet, Chinese Turkestan and Russian Turkestan — there is not a medical missionary or nurse to keep the plague-pot from boiling over! Despite the work of mission bodies in sending doctors and nurses overseas and in training national men and women for the task of healing, there are millions of people today outside the reach of medical care.

The United States has one physician and several nurses for each 759 persons; each American town of 1,000 or more people has one or more doctors; few people are more than 10 miles by good road from a physician. But look overseas and note:

.....each missionary physician the world over with an average prospective clientele of 2,500,000 people.

.....100 doctors for 130,000,000 natives in Africa

.....500,000 villages and towns in India without a doctor, nurse, hospital or clinic

.....Nepal, with 5,616,000 people, has neither doctor nor nurse

.....Bhutan, with 300,000 people, and the Baluchistan states, 400,000 people, are without medical skill

.....China has one trained physician for each 400,000 of her population, as against 527 for the same number in U. S. A.

.....14 Mexican states, population totaling 4,500,000, have no missionary doctor or hospital.

China and U. S., "Eye to Eye"
Lepers Go to Church
Plague Inoculation

Hospital
Modern Equ

Java

nent. Korea

African Clinic
Filipino Nurses
Ready to Operate

The Missionary M. D.

Cured!

WHEREVER the medical missionary from America or from Europe has settled in these lands overseas he has found a ready welcome. Once his mission is known thousands crowd to his door, be it grass hut or stone hospital. Lives that have been unreached by the word of the Gospel soften before this demonstration of Christlike service. This pioneer doctor in distant lands finds all manner of human complaints seeking his help. The leper, the lame, the blind, the deaf, those emaciated by parasites, those mutilated by ignorance, pin their hope on him. Even the nonmedical missionary in the more primitive fields soon finds it necessary for him, too, to use iodine and bandage, to cut and bind and often to vaccinate.

Following this pioneer service a clinic is opened. Promising boys and girls from the schools are trained in the rudiments of nursing. Perhaps a nurse from America comes to help. Soon a hospital with a few beds is opened, and before long new and larger quarters are imperative, so far does the fame of the institution spread. People from distant communities bring their sick on bullock cart, or human back, on improvised stretcher, or in wheelbarrow. The missionary or some of the trained native nurses travel out into the more inaccessible regions, or open clinics that in time become nuclei of new hospitals.

Training National Practitioners

In a country like China, where medical missionary work is further advanced than in central Africa, and where there are able young men and women graduating from the higher grades of school, special emphasis is placed upon the training of national physicians and nurses. Such cities as Peking, Chengtu, Tsinan, and Seoul have medical colleges giving degrees to their graduates; practically every mission hospital has a nurse-training department preparing Christian young women for the ministry of mercy.

With the growth of education and the development of hospitals and medical schools more and more attention will be given to this training of national practitioners. In these workers lies the hope of ministering adequately to the needs of millions in the Orient and in the tropics. Meanwhile, and for many years to come, all these fields will be calling for larger numbers of trained men from America and from Europe.

Controlling Many Diseases

The missionary doctor, aided in many instances by representatives of philanthropic agencies carrying on similar activity, has succeeded in finding new cures, in controlling diseases, in teaching sanitation and disease prevention. He has ever been the scientific investigator as well as practitioner. Serving as he does vast millions in vast territories, he has ever been seeking causes and their prevention as greater service than later remedial measures.

Private Ambulance!

Blindness is a common disease in the Orient and in Africa.

caused chiefly by malnutrition, dirt and a lack of knowledge of the simplest precautionary methods. Drs. Hopkins and Smith, in the Methodist Episcopal hospital in Peking, treat approximately 6,000 eye cases yearly. Other doctors in other hospitals throughout the world, perform similar service for many thousands.

Leprosy was largely wiped out of Europe by segregation centuries ago. The beginning has been made of ridding Africa and Asia of the dread disease by segregation. There are more than 103 leper colonies and hospitals under 18 flags, cared for by American missionaries. The name of Mary Reed, Methodist missionary in India, will forever be associated with this form of Christian service. Dr. Stauffacher, of Africa, and others in India and China, are curing lepers in early stages of the disease by the use of chaulmoogra oil.

Tuberculosis in India is being fought in the Madar Sanitarium, Ajmer, and through the sanitary and preventive teaching of every mission doctor the world over.

Smallpox, the plague and other epidemic diseases are combated by means of vaccination, teaching and demonstration of sanitary methods. Dr. Perkins stemming three epidemics in a year at Kiukiang, Dr. Skinner forcing the interment of 16,000 unburied coffins in Yenping, are epochs in the story of Methodist medical service to China.

Sleeping sickness, for centuries the scourge of central Africa and decimater of its population, can now be cured by the new remedy "tryparsamide." Drs. Piper, Stauffacher and others are pioneering with this remedy to wipe the dread disease from off the continent.

Clinic Gospel Service, Korea

"Preach the Kingdom . . Heal the Sick"

RECENTLY Bishop Birney said: "Medical work is the particular form of our mission activity now in China which has the confidence of the Chinese and against which there is practically no criticism. It is more valuable than it ever was in the way of a testimony of the real spirit and motive of our whole work." And the same might be written of the service of physician and nurse, of hospital and clinic and dispensary in India, Korea, in Mohammedan lands, in Africa, in Latin America.

"Medical work in China is a providential method of opening new fields and regions for the gospel," the late

Bishop Bashford often said. "The medical missionary follows the example of the Master, who went everywhere teaching and healing the sick. The work combines the best features of practical Christianity and Christian humanitarianism, for it relieves suffering in a land where the suffering of the people continually fills one with compassion. Medical work has proved the most effective means of disarming prejudice, conquering hostility, and opening doors. Chinese Christians have been able to point hostile persons to man after man, child after child, whose life has been saved by the missionary physician when the Chinese had abandoned the patient to death; and no Confucianist or Buddhist in China will speak against such humanitarian service."

Dr. William H. Welch, director of the School of Hygiene and Public Health, Johns Hopkins University, has this to say concerning medical service: "I am glad to bear my personal testimony to the vast importance of the work of the medical missionary. This work has demonstrated not only its power to further most effectively the ultimate end of all Christian missionary effort, but also its influence in leading the people into the paths of Western education, science and civilization and thereby promoting the advancement and the welfare of the countries where the missionary works."

It is a notable fact that the medical missionary, demonstrator of Christianity at its best, has been the most successful pioneer in new fields. The late Dr. Samuel Gurney, pastor-physician, opened the way for the evangelist and the teacher among numerous tribes in central Africa. Dr. Levi B. Salmans, of Guanajuato, Mexico, gave

medical service to 750,000 clinic and hospital patients, and preached the gospel to every one of them. Dr. Salmans and Dr. Thomas Coole, of China, hold both M. D. and D. D. degrees. Some of the medical missionaries of the Methodist Episcopal Church earlier in life were pastors in America. Every clinic and hospital on the mission field has its Bible woman, or evangelist, or pastor, visiting, comforting and telling the "glad news" to those who came primarily for relief of their suffering.

Methodist Medical Missions	Number of missionary doctors	Number of missionary nurses	Number of missionary hospitals or dispensaries
China	34	22	20
Korea	5	7	4
Philippines	1	1	2
Malaysia	1	6	2
India	5	9	6
Africa	7	12	12
Latin-America	4	10	9

"And Jesus went about in all Galilee, teaching and preaching the gospel of the kingdom; and healing all manner of disease and all manner of sickness, among the people.

"And the report of Him went forth into all Syria and they brought unto Him all that were sick, holden with divers diseases and torments, possessed with demons, and epileptic and palsied; and He healed them."